

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 218958
ORIGIN EUR-12

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, UK, BE, LU, NL, FI, SW, DA, NO, IC, EI

SUBJECT: COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

REF.: STATE 207310

1. AS YOU WERE INFORMED BY DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER (REFTEL), WE ARE BEGINNING THE PREPARATION OF UNCLASSIFIED COUNTRY HUMAN RIGHTS FOR SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS, PURSUANT TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 STATE 218958

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT. ADDRESSEE POSTS ARE REQUESTED SUBMIT DRAFTS BY TELEGRAM NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 8, SLUGGED FOR EUR/NE.

2. SUPPLEMENTING THE GUIDANCE PROVIDED REFTTEL, WE HOPE POSTS WILL REVIEW OUR LAST SUBMISSIONS TO CONGRESS CRITICALLY, WITH AN EYE TO BOTH STYLE AND SUBSTANCE AND ANY

ADDITIONAL FACTORS OR RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MERIT TREATMENT. IN THIS REGARD, RECENT GUIDANCE FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN IS PROVIDED IN PARA 3 BELOW FOR YOUR BACKGROUND. WE RECOGNIZE THAT SOME OF THESE FACTORS MAY HAVE LITTLE MEANING IN A EUROPEAN CONTEXT; OTHERS DO AND WE WANT TO BE RESPONSIVE.

3. BEGIN TEXT. YOU WILL HAVE NOTED FROM MR. CHRISTOPHER'S TELEGRAM TO THE AMBASSADORS THAT OBJECTIVITY, SPECIFICITY AND RESPONSIVENESS TO THE HEADINGS IN THE FORMAT DESERVE PRIORITY ATTENTION.

WE HOPE THERE WILL BE EVEN TREATMENT IN THE REPORTS OF ALL PERTINENT HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS. FOR INSTANCE, WE NEED ACCURATE PRECIS, QUANTIFIED TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, OF THE GOVERNMENTS' ACTUAL COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING THE LOT OF THE POOR. WE SHOULD ANALYZE THOSE GOVERNMENT-DIRECTED OR TOLERATED PRACTICES WHICH HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON ECONOMIC HUMAN RIGHTS, I.E., REGRESSIVE TAX SYSTEMS, THE EXTENT AND EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION, WAGE POLICIES, ETC. WE SHOULD AIM FOR SPECIFICITY WITH REGARD INTER ALIA TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN, LABOR RIGHTS AND DISCRIMINATION ARISING FROM ETHNIC, COMMUNAL, RACIAL OR CASTE FACTORS. THE REPORTS SHOULD PAY DUE ATTENTION TO RELEVANT LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS, POINTING OUT AS APPROPRIATE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE PRACTICE. THE EXISTENCE OR LACK OF EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 218958

CONSTRAINTS AGAINST REPRESSIVE PRACTICES SHOULD BE NOTED WHERE POSSIBLE.

WHEN POSSIBLE WE SHOULD AVOID GENERALITIES ABOUT SUCH MATTERS AS PRISON CONDITIONS, ABOUT WHICH WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO BE REASONABLY KNOWLEDGEABLE. SOME OF OUR REPORTS LAST YEAR INDICATED THAT THERE WERE INSTANCES OF TORTURE OR OTHER BRUTAL TREATMENT OF PRISONERS BUT THAT SUCH TREATMENT WAS NOT CONDONED BY THE GOVERNMENT. NOT ALL OF THOSE REPORTS WENT ON TO ADDRESS THE OBVIOUS NEXT QUESTION: WERE APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY OR ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES TAKEN TO CORRECT THE SITUATION? UNLESS SUCH CORRECTIVE MEASURES ARE SYSTEMATICALLY APPLIED, ASSERTIONS THAT GOVERNMENTS DO NOT CONDONE BRUTAL PRACTICES SHOULD BE AVOIDED.

IN SOME OTHER REPORTS MENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WAS NARROWLY CONFINED TO INSTANCES WE WERE ABLE TO VERIFY OFFICIALLY, OMITTING PLAUSIBLE IF UNVERIFIABLE CHARGES OF ABUSIVE PRACTICES. THIS TENDED TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE WERE UNINFORMED, DEFENSIVE OR INSENSITIVE WITH REGARD TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT CITATIONS OF DATA AND VIEWS PROVIDED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE ACCURATE AND SUBSTANTIVELY COMPLETE, AND THAT REFERENCES TO SUCH ORGANIZATIONS FROM OTHER SOURCES ARE VERIFIED WHEN POSSIBLE.
END TEXT.

4. COPIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS PROVIDED CONGRESS ON JANUARY 31, 1978 WERE TRANSMITTED TO ADDRESSEES AS FOLLOWS: LONDON (STATE 22919), DUBLIN (STATE 22926), HELSINKI (STATE 22925), STOCKHOLM (STATE 22917), COPENHAGEN (STATE 22930), OSLO (STATE 22931) REYKJAVIK

(STATE 22928), BRUSSELS (STATE 22937), THE HAGUE (STATE 22916), AND LUXEMBOURG (STATE 22924)
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PAGE 04 STATE 218958

5. FOR YOUR ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND, COPIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS SUBMITTED BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS UNDER ARTICLE 40 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT OF CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, AIRMAILED AUGUST 28, ATTENTION DCMS, TO LONDON, COPENHAGEN, HELSINKI, OSLO, AND STOCKHOLM. CHRISTOPHER

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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